

(d) NRCS will conduct focused outreach in regions of national significance in order to maximize program participation. These areas could include landscapes such as the Chesapeake Bay watershed and Great Lakes basin.

§ 1470.6 Eligibility requirements.

(a) *Eligible applicant.* To be an eligible applicant for CSP, a producer must be the operator in the Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm records management system. Potential applicants that are not in the FSA farm records management system must establish records with FSA. Potential applicants whose records are not current in the FSA farm records management system must update those records prior to the close of the evaluation period to be considered eligible. NRCS may grant exceptions to the “operator of record” requirement for producers, tenants, and owners in the FSA farm records management system that can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of NRCS, they will operate and have effective control of the land. Applicants must also meet all of the following requirements:

(1) Have effective control of the land unless an exception is made by the Chief in the case of land administered by the BIA, Indian lands, or other instances in which the Chief determines that there is sufficient assurance of control;

(2) Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions found at 7 CFR part 12;

(3) Be in compliance with Adjusted Gross Income provisions found at 7 CFR part 1400;

(4) Supply information, as required by NRCS, to determine eligibility for the program, including but not limited to, information related to eligibility requirements and ranking factors; conservation activity and production system records; information to verify the applicant's status as a historically underserved producer, if applicable; and payment eligibility as established by 7 CFR part 1400; and

(5) Provide a list of all members of the legal entity and embedded entities along with members' tax identification numbers and percentage interest in the entity. Where applicable, American In-

dians, Alaska Natives, and Pacific Islanders may use another unique identification number for each individual eligible for payment.

(b) *Eligible land.* A contract application must include all of the eligible land on an applicant's agricultural operation, except as identified in paragraph (b)(3) of this section. A participant may submit an application(s) to enter into an additional contract(s) for newly acquired eligible land, which would then compete with other applications in a subsequent ranking period. The land as described below is part of the agricultural operation and eligible for enrollment in the CSP:

(1) Private agricultural land;

(2) Agricultural Indian lands;

(3) NIPF:

(i) By special rule in the statute, NIPF is eligible land,

(ii) No more than 10 percent of the acres enrolled nationally in any fiscal year may be NIPF,

(iii) The applicant will designate by submitting a separate application if they want to offer NIPF for funding consideration,

(iv) If designated for funding consideration, then the NIPF component of the operation will include all the applicant's NIPF. If not designated for funding consideration, then the applicant's NIPF will not be part of the agricultural operation; and

(4) Other private agricultural land, as determined by the Chief, on which resource concerns related to agricultural production could be addressed by enrolling the land in CSP.

(c) *Ineligible land.* The following ineligible lands are part of the agricultural operation, but ineligible for inclusion in the contract or for payment in CSP:

(1) Land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), 7 CFR part 1410;

(2) Land enrolled in the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), 7 CFR part 1467;

(3) Land enrolled in the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), 7 CFR part 1415;

(4) Land enrolled in the Conservation Security Program, 7 CFR part 1469;

(5) Public land including land owned by a Federal, State, or local unit of government; and

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(6) Land used for crop production after June 18, 2008, that had not been planted, considered to be planted, or devoted to crop production for at least 4 of the 6 years preceding that date, unless that land:

(i) Had previously been enrolled in CRP,

(ii) Has been maintained using long-term crop rotation practices as determined by the designated conservationist, or

(iii) Is incidental land needed for efficient operation of the farm or ranch as determined by the designated conservationist.

§ 1470.7 Enhancements and conservation practices.

(a) Participant decisions describing the additional enhancements and conservation practices to be implemented under the conservation stewardship contract will be recorded in the conservation stewardship plan.

(b) NRCS will make available to the public the list of enhancements and conservation practices available to be installed, adopted, maintained, and managed through the CSP.

(c) NRCS will make available bundled suites of conservation activities for participants to voluntarily select to include as part of their conservation stewardship plans. The bundles will be designed to coordinate the installation and adoption of enhancements with each other to address resource concerns in a more comprehensive and cost-effective manner.

(d) CSP encourages the use of other NRCS programs to install conservation practices that are required to meet agreed-upon stewardship thresholds, but the practices may not be compensated through CSP.

§ 1470.8 Technical and other assistance.

(a) NRCS may provide technical assistance to an eligible applicant or participant either directly or through a technical service provider (TSP) as set forth in 7 CFR part 652.

(b) NRCS retains approval authority over certification of work done by non-NRCS personnel for the purpose of approving CSP payments.

(c) NRCS will ensure that technical assistance is available and program specifications are appropriate so as not to limit producer participation because of size or type or operation or production system, including specialty crop and organic production. In providing technical assistance to specialty crop and organic producers, NRCS will provide appropriate training to field staff to enable them to work with these producers and to utilize cooperative agreements and contracts with nongovernmental organizations with expertise in delivering technical assistance to these producers.

(d) NRCS will assist potential applicants dealing with the requirements of certification under the National Organic Program and CSP requirements concerning how to coordinate and simultaneously meet eligibility standards under each program.

(e) NRCS may utilize the services of State foresters and existing technical assistance programs such as the Forest Stewardship Program of the U.S. Forest Service, in coordinating assistance to NIPF owners.

Subpart B—Contracts and Payments

§ 1470.20 Application for contracts and selecting offers from applicants.

(a) *Submission of contract applications.* Applicants may submit an application to enroll all of their eligible land into CSP on a continuous basis.

(b) *Stewardship threshold requirement.* To be eligible to participate in CSP, an applicant must submit to the designated conservationist for approval, a contract application that:

(1) Indicates the applicant's conservation activities, at the time of application, are meeting the stewardship threshold for at least one resource concern;

(2) Would, at a minimum, meet or exceed the stewardship threshold for at least one priority resource concern in addition to the resource concern described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section by the end of the conservation stewardship contract by:

(i) Installing and adopting additional conservation activities, and